

Be Prepared



It pays to be prepared." I don't know who first coined this phrase, but it fits every situation in life. It does pay to be prepared. If you are in the kitchen and you decide to bake a cake, you make sure that all the ingredients are available and that your oven works. It is important to follow the recipe so that your cake comes out like the picture in the cookbook. It is no different when it comes to decisions concerning your situation when you can no longer manage your home alone.

You may be in a situation now where you are helping a loved one with this issue. Carol has been learning a great deal since her Aunt Ellen who lives two hours away was found to have the early stages of dementia. Her Aunt Ellen had no plans for who would assist her with her affairs. Her two sons are missionaries overseas and have been doing the best they can by phone. They have been depending on Carol to help their mother pay bills and take her shopping.

Carol knows that she cannot keep the same routine with her Aunt Ellen because her needs are becoming greater. Her Aunt Ellen loves to garden and can vegetables, but she has lost interest in tending the garden. Carol lives too far away and it is not practical for her to keep up her Aunt Ellen's yard.

Carol looked on the Internet for help. She noticed that much of the information was similar.

- Be prepared for when you will be dependent on others
- Think about estate planning and talk to an attorney
- Arrange for someone you trust to help you such as appointing a power of attorney
- Understand how Medicare and Medicaid work towards your long-term care needs
- Become aware of the eldercare services that are in your area
- Know what resources you have and how these resources can be maximized to cover expenses
- Join a caregivers group for support and information

These are good first steps towards being prepared for those times when you may be dependent on others. Because Carol's Aunt Ellen did not prepare for her long-term care needs, she experiences a lot of anxiety and panics easily over simple matters. Should she need to move from her home of forty years, it will be a tremendous transition for her and very difficult for those trying to assist her. It will take a lot of patience and understanding for Carol to help her Aunt Ellen cope with the changes in her living situation as well as her health needs.



What can I do?

Every family situation and dynamic is different when it comes to moving a loved one who may be confused about what is happening and why. If you know of someone who is facing this issue whether they are well prepared or not, follow these suggestions:

- Be a friend
- Offer to help move possessions
- Lend a listening ear to the family members
- Visit the person often during the transition
- Call the person on the phone to say hello
- Store possessions for a while if possible instead of getting rid of them right away
- Decorate the new living area with as many keepsakes and photos as possible
- Share key Scripture verses that give comfort
- Pray with the person and let them know that others are praying also

He Leadeth Me

He leadeth me! O blessed tho't! O words with heav'nly comfort fraught! Whate'er I do, where'er I be, Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Joseph H Gilmore/William B Bradbury

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